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SUBJECT: MORE ON ZAMBIAN PREPARATIONS FOR UNGA, UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL, AND UNESCO VOTE

REF: A. LUSAKA 644

[B.](#) LUSAKA 637

Classified By: DCM Michael Koplovsky for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. The Zambian Government (GRZ) is inclined to call for measures to address human rights problems in Burma, North Korea, and Sudan at the next session of the UN Human Rights Council. A senior Foreign Ministry official voiced some displeasure with Zambia's tendency to engage in bloc voting and intimated to the DCM that the GRZ will approach each issue with consistency and a greater measure of objectivity. The GRZ remains critical of the U.S. embargo on Cuba but is willing, nonetheless, to encourage the Cuban Government to respond favorably to President Obama's decision to increase remittances and allow family visits to Cuba. Regarding UNESCO, the GRZ would like to see the UN agency led by a female Director General and will cast its vote accordingly in Paris. Although the GRZ does not yet intend to recognize Kosovo, GRZ officials are prepared to meet with Government of Kosovo representatives on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meetings. End Summary.

¶2. (C) The GRZ is cognizant of the human rights problems in Burma and appears inclined to support UN efforts to address these at the Human Rights Council. During a September 18 meeting, Zambian Foreign Ministry Permanent Secretary Tens Kapoma described Burma as an "embarrassment" to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Nevertheless, Kapoma said little to suggest that Zambia would depart from its long-held position and begin supporting country specific human rights resolutions.

¶3. (C) Instead, Zambia is more likely to lend its support to UN efforts that call for independent experts and special rapporteurs in countries with poor human rights records. According to Kapoma, the GRZ will endorse UN initiatives on Sudan and North Korea, both in Geneva and New York. Kapoma suggested that there would be no contradiction between the GRZ's positions at UNGA and UNHRC and also implied that the GRZ will hold countries such as Burma to the same standard that it holds Sudan and North Korea.

¶4. (C) Kapoma noted that the GRZ would be less likely to vote as a Southern African Development Community (SADC), NAM, or African Union (AU) bloc during the next UNGA session due to diverging interests within the G-77 and lack of consensus.

Additionally, Kapoma pointed to Zambia's displeasure with bloc voting, which he said "discredits" Zambia. "There is a limit to blind solidarity." His comments were consistent with those of another senior GRZ official on September 11, who told poloff that the GRZ will no longer allow human rights violators to take Zambia's support for granted (Ref B).

¶5. (C) Kapoma, however, remained vehemently critical of U.S. policy on Cuba, particularly the economic embargo. The DCM pointed to policy developments in the United States, such as

President Obama's decision to increase remittances and allow family visits to Cuba, and suggested that on his upcoming State visit to Havana President Banda could encourage the Cuban Government to respond more favorably to this approach. Kapoma conceded to propose this to President Banda, in advance of his forthcoming Latin America trip.

¶6. (C) On the ongoing elections for a new UNESCO Director General, Kapoma suggested that Zambia would support one of the female candidates (in lieu of an AU candidate). On Kosovo, Kapoma agreed that the GRZ delegation would meet with Government of Kosovo representatives in New York in order to communicate Zambia's position (Ref A). He, nevertheless, underscored that Zambia would not adjust its policy until the International Court of Justice issues its advisory opinion.

BOOTH